

Central Intelligence Agency



Washington, D. C. 20505

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NOTE FOR: Mr. Donald P. Gregg
Assistant to the Vice President
for National Security Affairs

Don,

Per your request, I am forwarding material
on Helms prepared by our Office of Personnel.
Hope it suffices.



Executive Secretary

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Richard Helms was in intelligence work since his days with the Office of Strategic Services as a naval officer. He combined the best characteristics of a strong leader -- skilled in the complex arts of foreign intelligence operations -- an able administrator, and a dedicated career officer devoted to the public service.

His working career began with the United Press Associations in Berlin in 1935 as a Staff Correspondent. From 1936-1942 he was the National Advertising Manager of the Indianapolis Times Publishing Company. He entered the Navy in 1942 as a Lieutenant (j.g.) and left as a Lieutenant Commander in 1946. On 4 March 1946 he joined the Central Intelligence Group as Chief, Foreign Branch M, Office of Special Operations and then entered on duty with the Central Intelligence Agency at its inception in 1947 as an expert in Eastern European affairs.

His career in the Agency was marked by brilliance, exceptional motivation, and keen administrative ability. In January of 1953 he became the Chief of Operations for the Office of Special Operations (predecessor to DDP, now DDO). Throughout his career, he showed unusual interest in matters of Agency administration, the development of an Agency-wide career service system, and the training of personnel in general and specialized fields. He was known for his intimate knowledge of the personnel in the Clandestine Services and his excellent judgment of its people.

In February 1962 he was appointed Deputy Director for Plans. He consistently displayed an extraordinary and comprehensive knowledge of all types of Clandestine Services operations world-wide, a unique ability to deal promptly and efficiently with a vast flow of detail, and the rather rare talent to delegate.

In April 1965 he was appointed Deputy Director of Central Intelligence and Director in June of 1966, where he served until his retirement on 2 February 1973. Highly respected by his associates and subordinates in the Intelligence Community, he enjoyed the intense loyalty of his staff and other members of the Agency not

because of his position, but because of his integrity, dedication to the Agency, and the personal consideration and support which he extended to all of them.

As Director, he was in the unique position of supervising the entire United States Intelligence Community. He was the nerve center of control and the focal point of intelligence information for two Presidents, their Vice Presidents, and other key officials of our Government.

He was a leader in enhancing the popular understanding and respect for the importance of the role of intelligence in the conduct of our foreign relations and enjoyed the highest respect and admiration for his distinguished and remarkable contributions to the Central Intelligence Agency and his dedication to the cause of intelligence.

CARRIER AND SERVICE OF
RICHARD HELMS, DIRECTOR,
CIA

Mr. MAHON asked and was given permission to extend his remarks at this point in the Record and to include extraneous matter.)

Mr. MAHON. Mr. Speaker, I want to say a word about Richard M. Helms, who is soon to leave his post as Director of the Central Intelligence Agency and become Ambassador to Iran. Earlier this week Mr. Helms made his last appearance before the Defense Subcommittee on Appropriations in his capacity as Director of the CIA.

I have great admiration for Richard Helms. As a member of the House Appropriations Committee I had occasion to be closely associated with the Central Intelligence Agency at the time of its formation in 1947. Since 1947 I have been one of the Members of Congress who has met regularly with the funding of the CIA. I have followed the career of Mr. Helms as he has risen through the ranks to the position of Director and as he has served in that capacity since 1966.

Mr. Helms over the years has performed an outstanding service to the Nation. He has worked closely with several administrations. In his capacity as Director since 1966, he has borne a heavy burden of responsibility. He of course has not been charged with the responsibility of making national policy. His responsibility has been that of providing intelligence information to policymakers in Government.

Before the creation of the CIA, Mr. Helms as a young naval officer served in the Office of Strategic Services in Washington, England, France, and Germany during World War II. Following discharge in 1946, he went to work as a civilian in the Strategic Service Unit, War Department which was the successor organization to a major part of the Office of Strategic Services. From there he transferred to the Central Intelligence Group, and then to the Central Intelligence Agency when that Agency was established in 1947.

Within 5 years, he became the Deputy Deputy Director for Plans under the then Director of Central Intelligence, Walter Bedell Smith. He was elevated to the position of Deputy Director of Plans by John A. McCone and in 1965 was nominated by President Johnson to be Deputy Director of Central Intelligence.

In 1966 he was confirmed by the Senate as the Director of Central Intelligence.

Mr. Helms' intelligence career typifies service in Government. In 1965 the National Civil Service League awarded the Career Service Award for commending the best characteristics of a superior officer in the complex and demanding intelligence operations, an able administrator, and a dedicated career devoted to the public service.

I have heard Mr. Helms testify for many hours each year for a number of years. I have been impressed with his ability, objectivity, and sincerity. I have never heard him make a statement which tended to cause me to question his sincerity. He has been totally objective, totally disinclined to color the facts, absolutely reliable in presenting the facts as he saw them. That has been his job and he has done his job superbly. He has left a heritage of excellence for the CIA and the intelligence profession.

Many view foreign intelligence in the context of military operations solely, but it is also essential that we have accurate intelligence to forestall conflict. In March of 1969, President Nixon referred to CIA.

As one of the great instruments of our government for the preservation of peace, for the avoidance of war, and for the development of a society in which this kind of activity would not be so necessary, if necessary at all.

Mr. Speaker, the responsibility for providing objective facts and detached analysis in these crucial areas is the only way that we can be assured that those individuals responsible for making critical judgments concerning our Nation's security have available to them a basis of knowledge for the action he takes or, perhaps more important in some instances, for not taking any action at all.

The heavy burden upon the shoulders of Richard Helms and the Central Intelligence Agency, has not been limited to ferreting out, correctly analyzing, and disseminating information to the appropriate officials. These are not simple tasks in themselves, but no matter how well done, their value is naught unless the information is believed and used by those who have the responsibility to make decisions. Credibility within the Government community is the lifeblood of CIA. Without it, its work is ineffective and its cost is extravagant.

Mr. Speaker, under Mr. Helms' stewardship, credibility has been the trademark at the Central Intelligence Agency. Integrity and objectivity have been the watchwords. Absinence from any possible policy involvement has been the rule. These were the creeds that brought the professionalism which Mr. Helms has persistently pursued.

At the swearing-in ceremony of Mr. Helms as Director in 1966, President Johnson said:

Although he (Mr. Helms) has spent more than twenty years in public life attempting to avoid publicity, he has never been able to conceal the fact that he is one of the most trusted and most able and most dedicated professional career men in this Capital. No man has ever come to this high critical office with better qualifications.

I think it was Patrick Henry who said, "The battle is not to the strong alone. It is to the vigilant and to the active and to the brave." And it is to Dick Helms and to the Agency that he will now lead that we must look for this vigilance. His own record and the past achievements of his Agency give us full confidence in the future operation of the Central Intelligence Agency with judgment, with intelligence and above all with great public integrity.

Mr. Helms has lived up to these exacting expectations. He will give a full measure of devotion to his new job as Ambassador to Iran, and we will be wishing him well.

Mr. Speaker, under leave granted, I now insert two editorials concerning Mr. Helms' tenure at CIA:

[From the Washington Evening Star, Dec. 6, 1972]

Exit Richard Helms

It isn't official yet, but our usually impeccable official sources tell us that Richard M. Helms will soon be stepping down after six years as director of the Central Intelligence Agency, presumably to take on a new and important assignment in the Nixon administration. Whatever his future job may be, he will be sorely missed in the one which he is leaving.

Of the men who have headed the CIA since its inception in 1947, Helms stands out as the one truly professional intelligence expert. His career in the spy business covers a span of 22 years, beginning with a four-year stint with the Office of Strategic Services in World War II. After transferring to the newly-formed CIA, he served as deputy director for plans under General Walter Bedell Smith and John A. McCone, previous CIA heads.

As director, Helms brought a coolness of judgment and great administrative talent to one of the most sensitive and difficult jobs in the federal government. Under his leadership, the performance of the agency, in contrast to past years, has been highly discreet and, to the extent that such things can be judged, effective. It is suggested that his departure from the CIA may have resulted in part from a dispute within the intelligence community regarding the deployment of Russian nuclear missiles. Helms, from all the available evidence, his assessment of the world situation—and particularly in Indochina, where the CIA has borne heavy responsibilities—has been remarkably accurate.

The highly essential business of intelligence-gathering, being necessarily secret and to some minds distasteful, requires the kind of public confidence that Helms has been able to provide. As President Johnson remarked at his swearing-in ceremony, "Although he has spent more than 20 years in public life attempting to avoid publicity, he has never been able to conceal the fact that he is one of the most trusted and most able and most dedicated professional career men in this Capital." As director of the CIA, Richard Helms has fully justified that assessment.

[From the Washington Post, Dec. 27, 1972]

THE CHANCE AT CIA

There are such strict limits to what is knowable about the Central Intelligence Agency and its workings that any discussion of Mr. Helms' departure from the directorship and Mr. Schlesinger's appointment to replace him must necessarily rest on a comparatively small store of information. Even so, one or two things are plain. And chief among these is the fact, evident from what is known about the two men themselves, that one highly qualified and eminently capable official is being replaced by another.

He has a reputation for being tough in his work, and he has acquired a reputation among those who are asked to judge, as a man of great honesty and tough-mindedness. The term "tough-minded" in this connection can only seem to bring forth imaginary zither music for some people and visions of grown men running around endlessly shooting each other under trains. But Mr. Helms—unflappable, personally disinterested, and beyond the reach of political or ideological pressures where his judgment is concerned—earned his reputation for tough-mindedness in an intellectual sense. As Agency Director, he has been far less a public figure or celebrity than some of his predecessors—Allen Dulles, for example, or John McCone—evidently preferring to maintain a certain becoming obscurity. He has worked very effectively with some of his successors on the Hill. And, if he leaked (not by CIA) material, such as the Pentagon Papers, that has been appearing in the press is any guide, he and his Agency have also served their executive branch leaders with some distinction. One gets the impression that from the presumed efficacy of bombing the North Vietnamese to the presumed necessity of responding to very wild surmises of what the Russians were up to in nuclear weapons development, Mr. Helms has offered a practical, dispassionate and rigorously honest—if not always popular—view.

That the Congress will be pushing for some greater degree of responsiveness from the CIA in the coming session seems pretty certain. And there also is at least a chance that internal bureaucratic difficulties at the Agency will require some managerial rearranging. In a way, solely because he comes to CIA from outside (not from up the ranks), James Schlesinger may be specially suited to take on both. But he has other qualifications. At the Rand Corporation in California, Mr. Schlesinger did analytic work that gave him more than a passing familiarity with the intelligence estimating business. At the Budget Bureau—as it was then known—in the early days of the Nixon administration he proved himself a very astute, not to say downright cold-eyed, scrutinizor of military budget requests. His brief term at the AEC was notable in several respects. Mr. Schlesinger bucked the pressure of the atomic energy establishment to insist that the AEC take note of and respond to the claims of its ecological critics. And he attempted to push the agency back from its political role toward the more disinterested service role it was meant in the first place to fulfill. He, like Mr. Helms, is demonstrably a man of talent, dedication and impressive intellect. We should have been content to see them stay on in their present jobs. But if Mr. Helms is to leave the Central Intelligence Agency, we think Mr. Schlesinger is a first class choice to replace him.